

James Carey, Chairman of the Elizabeth Branch People's Organization for
Progress and supporting organization of the July 26 coalition

TESTIMONY:

QSAC SUMMARY REPORT

Dear Madam Commissioner and distinguished members of the state board,

I prepared this testimony with a great deal of skepticism and trepidation in regards to the future of children in the Elizabeth school district.

As a taxpayer, father of three, and a proponent of our youth's welfare, I am appalled at the cesspool of racism and fiscal mismanagement that's perpetuated in the Elizabeth school district.

In Tuesday's August 21, 2007 report of the Star Ledger, the commissioner was quoted saying *"In cases where governance ratings fall below 50 percent, the state may appoint three additional voting members to the board"* well Madam Commissioner, the time is imminent because Elizabeth rated at 34%.

As I indicated to the county superintendent and your representatives Mr. Ballentine and Mr. McBee respectively, time is of the essence, because this district has already imploded.

The previously released QSAC report basically validates/substantiates my assertions, that there is a great deal of unaccountability and mismanagement taking place in the district.

For example, let's reference to the latest appellate court's decision, which ruled against the district for land acquisition and not to mention an administrative law judge's ruling, where the district has to reimburse \$90,000 of state funding that was used inappropriately for a smear campaign.

Then, when you think it couldn't get any worse, Tuesday's, October 11th 2007 report in the Star Ledger's front page reads as followed: **Schools audit: \$2M was misspent, Elizabeth may have to return the money...** blatant violations under *Fis B3a, B4e* and *A2c* page 3 of the QSAC summary report.

However, the article that appeared the ensuing day is the one that pains every parent, in particular the parents/guardians of athletes in the Elizabeth district, who reside in low-income areas of the city. The front page also reads as followed: **Feds fear imbalance of races in special education, 21 N.J. districts told to use U.S. funds to fix numbers.**

It's no secret that the district classifies students so they can maintain a C average, for the sole purpose of participating in Elizabeth's highly regarded athletic programs and to receive additional special needs funding. **(I beg of you to prove me wrong)**

Given all the newspaper articles about misspending and misappropriation of funding I am struggling tremendously, trying to understand how Commissioner Davy's, managed to give the district 82% when it came to fiscal management.

In closing, it's theoretically and scientifically impossible for the Elizabeth school district to close the achievement gap, when you have core-curriculum teachers out for a whole year nevertheless, you still provide the students with passing grades although they didn't learn anything.

In addition, they hire one particular ethnic group knowing, that they possess little or no command of the English language.

Hearing the dire straits of appeals, what is the commission's recourse or plan of action, or do you intend to do anything at all, because these issues that were presented are just microcosm of a more complex picture.

Thank you